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OLC 73-0758

25 June 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with Senator Symington re Southern Air Transport,
Upcoming Hearings on Laos, and Mr. Colby's Confirmation

1. Today I accompanied Messrs. Colby and Houston to a meeting with Senator Symington which we had arranged primarily in response to Symington's letter to the Director forwarding complaints he had received from Stephen D. Potts, of Overseas National Airways, Inc., and Jerrold Scoutt, of World Airways, Inc., concerning our disposition of Southern Air Transport.
2. After hearing Mr. Houston's explanation of the rationale behind our proposed action and the points developed in recent CAB hearings, Senator Symington said that he would like a letter setting forth all the facts that he could use or show in responding to such questions or criticisms as were contained in the Potts/Scoutt letter. He said that the Agency might have very valid reasons for its positions, but we should realize that whatever we do is subject to scrutiny and there are a number of people who will be quick to attack us if we don't handle such matters very carefully. (OGC is drafting the letter requested by Senator Symington.)
3. In discussing the upcoming confirmation hearing on 2 July, Senator Symington said that Mr. Colby should be prepared to answer questions regarding the authority for the Agency's involvement in Laos and any plans Mr. Colby might have for the use of military personnel in the Agency.
4. On the subject of the Agency's appearance before the Committee on Wednesday, 27 June, jointly with Defense witnesses on the question of Laos, Senator Symington insisted that the hearing should be in open session. Mr. Colby pointed out this would create some serious problems and toward the end of our discussion the Senator said he would think over the possibility of an executive session.

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5. Finally, Mr. Colby told the Senator some of his plans regarding changes in the machinery for the production of National Estimates and similar intelligence studies. Senator Symington asked to be kept informed of future developments in this regard, and repeated his admonition that the estimative process should not be permitted to fall under the domination of the military.

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JOHN M. MAURY
Legislative Counsel

Distribution:

Orig. - Subj.

- 1 - Mr. Colby
- 1 - Mr. Houston
- 1 - Colby Confirmation
- 1 - SAT file
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